

IN THE CLAIMS:

The text of all pending claims, (including withdrawn claims) is set forth below. Cancelled and not entered claims are indicated with claim number and status only. The claims as listed below show added text with underlining and deleted text with ~~striketrough~~. The status of each claim is indicated with one of (original), (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED), (cancelled), (withdrawn), (new), (previously presented), or (not entered).

Please CANCEL claims 68-70 without prejudice or disclaimer.

Please AMEND claims 38 and 46 and ADD new claims 72-74 in accordance with the following:

1.-37. (CANCELLED)

38. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) A miniaturized ~~Miniaturized~~-relay comprising:

[[(-)]a first condenser plate;_i

[[(-)]a second condenser plate facing said first condenser plate, in which said second plate is smaller than or equal to said first plate;_i

[[(-)]an intermediate space;_i

[[(-)]a conductive element arranged in said intermediate space, said conductive element being a detached part for movement freely along the intermediate space between a first end of said intermediate space, defining a first zone, and a second end of said intermediate space, defining a second zone, said movement depending on voltages present in said first and second condenser plates, where said first condenser plate is arranged in said first zone and said second condenser plate is arranged in said second zone;_i

[[(-)]a third condenser plate arranged in said second zone, in which said third condenser plate is smaller than or equal to said first condenser plate, and in which said second and third condenser plates are, together, larger than said first condenser plate; and

[[(-)]a first contact point of an electric circuit, a second contact point of said electric circuit, in which said first and second contact points define first stops;_i

wherein, when said element contacts said first stops said conductive element closes said electric circuit, and

wherein ~~the~~ a closing of the electric circuit occurs even though the ~~conductor~~-conductive element remains at a voltage in principle unknown, which will be forced by the electric circuit that is closed.

39. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Relay according to claim 71, wherein said first

contact point is in said second zone.

40. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Relay according to claim 39, wherein said second contact point is in said second zone.

41. (WITHDRAWN) Relay according to claim 38, further comprising:
a fourth condenser plate arranged in said first zone, in which said first condenser plate and said second condenser plate are equal to each other, and said third condenser plate and said fourth condenser plate are equal to each other.

42 (WITHDRAWN) Relay according to claim 41, wherein said first, second, third and fourth condenser plates are all equal to each other.

43. (WITHDRAWN) Relay according to claim 41, further comprising:
a fifth condenser plate arranged in said first zone and a sixth condenser plate arranged in said second zone, in which said fifth condenser plate and said sixth condenser plate are equal to each other.

44. (WITHDRAWN) Relay according to claim 43 wherein:
six condenser plates are arranged in said first zone and six condenser plates are arranged in said second zone.

45. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Relay according to claim 71, further comprising:
a second stop in said first zone.

46. (CURRENTLY AMENDED) ~~Relay according to claim 871, further~~ A miniaturized relay comprising:
a first condenser plate;
a second condenser plate facing said first condenser plate, in which said second plate is smaller than or equal to said first plate;
an intermediate space;
a conductive element arranged in said intermediate space, said conductive element being a detached part for movement freely along the intermediate space between a first end of said intermediate space, defining a first zone, and a second end of said intermediate space.

defining a second zone, said movement depending on voltages present in said first and second condenser plates, where said first condenser plate is arranged in said first zone and said second condenser plate is arranged in said second zone;

a third condenser plate arranged in said second zone, in which said third condenser plate is smaller than or equal to said first condenser plate, and in which said second and third condenser plates are, together, larger than said first condenser plate;

a first contact point of an electric circuit, a second contact point of said electric circuit, in which said first and second contact points define first stops, and upon said element contacting said first stops said conductive element closes said electric circuit;

a substrate that defines, with the first, second and third condenser plates and the first stops, the intermediate space, and conductive element's movement is in a direction perpendicular to the substrate; and

a third contact point arranged in said first zone, in which said third contact point defines a second stop, such that said conductive element closes a second electric circuit when in contact with said second contact point and said third contact point.

47. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Relay according to claim 46, wherein said conductive element comprises a hollow cylindrical part which defines an axis, in the interior of which is housed said second contact point, and a flat part which protrudes from one side of said radially hollow cylindrical part and which extends in the direction of said axis, in which said flat part has a height, measured in the direction of said axis, which is less than a height of said cylindrical part measured in the direction of said axis.

48. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Relay according to claim 46, wherein said conductive element comprises a hollow parallelepipedic part which defines an axis, in the interior of which is housed said second contact point, and a flat part which protrudes from one side of said radially hollow parallelepipedic part and which extends in the direction of said axis, in which said flat part has a height, measured in the direction of said axis, which is less than a height of said parallelepipedic part, measured in the direction of said axis.

49. (WITHDRAWN) Relay according to claim 38, further comprising:

a third contact point and a fourth contact point arranged between said first zone and said conductive element, in which said third contact point and fourth contact point define second stops, such that said conductive element closes a second electric circuit when in contact with

said third contact point and fourth contact point.

50 (WITHDRAWN) Relay according to claim 38, wherein assemblies of said condenser plates are each arranged in each of said first and second zones to have a central symmetry with respect to a center of symmetry, and in which said center of symmetry is superposed to the center of masses of said conductive element.

51. (WITHDRAWN) Relay according to claim 38, wherein an assembly of said condenser plates is arranged in each of said first and second zones and has central asymmetry, thus generating a moment of forces with respect to a center of masses of said conductive element.

52. (WITHDRAWN) Relay according to claim 49, wherein between said first zone and said second zone there extends two lateral walls, in which there is play between said lateral walls and said conductive element, said play being sufficiently small so as to geometrically prevent said conductive element from simultaneously entering into contact with a contact point of the group formed by said first and second contact points and with a contact point of the group formed by said third and fourth contact points.

53. (WITHDRAWN) Relay according to claim 38, wherein said conductive element has rounded external surfaces.

54. (WITHDRAWN) Relay according to claim 38, wherein said conductive element is cylindrical.

55. (WITHDRAWN) Relay according to claim 38, wherein said conductive element is spherical.

56. (WITHDRAWN) Relay according to claim 38, wherein said conductive element has an upper face and a lower face, said upper and lower faces being perpendicular to said movement of said conductive element, and said at least one lateral face having slight protuberances.

57. (WITHDRAWN) Relay according to claim 38, wherein said conductive element is

hollow.

58. (WITHDRAWN) Relay according to claim 38, wherein said first condenser plate has a surface area which is equal to or double the surface area of said second condenser plate.

59. (WITHDRAWN) Relay according to claim 38, wherein at least one of said condenser plates is, simultaneously, one of said contact points.

60. (WITHDRAWN) Use of a relay according to claim 38, as an accelerometer.

61. (WITHDRAWN) Use of a relay according to claim 38, as an accelerometer in airbags.

62. (WITHDRAWN) Use of a relay according to claims 38, as a tiltmeter.

63. (WITHDRAWN) Use of a relay according to claim 38, as a detector of Coriolis forces.

64. (WITHDRAWN) Use of a relay according to claim 38, as a pressure sensor.

65. (WITHDRAWN) Use of a relay according to claim 38, as a microphone.

66. (WITHDRAWN) Use of a relay according to claim 38, as a flow sensor.

67. (WITHDRAWN) Use of a relay according to claim 38, as a temperature sensor.

68. -70. (CANCELLED)

71. (PREVIOUSLY PRESENTED) Relay according to claim 38, further comprising a substrate that defines, with the first, second and third condenser plates and the first stops, the intermediate space, and conductive element's movement is in a direction perpendicular to the substrate.

72. (NEW) The relay according to claim 38, the closing of the electric circuit occurring

even though the conductive element remains at a voltage in principle unknown since said conductive element being not in electrical contact with its surroundings when moving across said intermediate space.

73. (NEW) The relay according to claim 72, the conductive element being not in electrical contact with walls that define said intermediate space when moving across said intermediate space.

74. (NEW) A miniaturized relay comprising:
a first condenser plate in a first zone;
a second condenser plate and a third condenser plate in a second zone; and
a conductive element capable of freely moving along an intermediate space between a first end of said intermediate space and defining the first zone and a second end of said intermediate space defining the second zone and not in electrical contact with walls that define the intermediate space when moving,

the movement of the conductive element depending on voltages present in the first and second condenser plates, and the conductive element being.